or places ; and it failed to serve the interests of the Erumeli district. The owners of the Cheruvalli and Vellanadi estates were prepared to allow the widening or diversion of their present roads without claiming any compensation, and to co-operate with the Government in carrying out the project. In the Legislative Council, the Government had promised to reconsider the matter if further facts proved that the Kanjirapalli-Erumeli road was not enough. The Member requested that his contentions might be taken into consideration and the matter viewed favourably.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Hawkings, I find that the road you propose was estimated for some time ago and the cost of the work was found to be about Rs. 40,000. The Chief Engineer explains that, on the ground of expense and the difficult nature of the country, the construction of that road is held over indefinitely, an alternative road having been taken up for construction meanwhile. He now informs me that it may be possible to reduce the expenditure below Rs. 40,000 even if the cost of construction of the three bridges. is included. I have therefore asked him to instruct the local officers to go over the ground again and submit an estimate. If it is found that the cost can be reduce appreciably, I shall see that the work is included in the programme at an early date.

70. New toll gates on the northern outlet road.

MR. A. J. WRIGHT (*Member, Kannan Devan Planters' Association*) said that the northern outlet road connecting Munnar in the centre of the High Ranges with the Coimbatore District was opened about twenty years ago. No tolls had been levied on it till August 1925, when, at a very short notice, one toll gate was established at Chinnar where the road entered the Travancore territory and another at Luckam, approximately 22 miles from Chinnar.

The Government had been addressed in November 1925, complaining about the location of the second toll gate between two divisions of the Talliar Estate which taxed inter-estate traffic daily, with a view to removing it to a place four miles or so lower down the road. Alternatively, the suggestion was made that the second toll gate might be abolished as no traffic could enter the northern outlet road at any point of its course as there were no branch roads. Attention was also drawn to the rates levied upon light motor lorries and cart traffic, *viz.*, Re. 1-8 as. and 4 as. respectively, which were quite out of proportion to the loads carried by the two classes of vehicles, and bore no relation to the amount of damage done to the road surface by the narrow cart wheels as compared with the pneumatic tyres of the one-ton motor lorries. No reply to the letter or acknowledgment of it had been received.

These tolls were unfortunately established when the condition of the road was unsatisfactory. The present method appeared to be to spread metal and earth and to allow the traffic to consolidate them. This was very hard on the draught animals and made the roads very bad during the rainy season, particularly as in many parts very little metal and a very great deal of earth had been applied.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Wright, I had occasion to travel over that road a few weeks ago and I must say that I was struck by the contrast between the Travancore road and the road in British India, and the comparison is in favour of Travancore. The slight defects in the matter of metalling, which you referred to, will be remedied and, I am sure, the Chief Engineer will take steps to have them rectified soon. In the matter of toll gates, I had occasion to see the file dealing with the representation of the Kannan Devan Hills Planters' Association just a few days ago. I must confess that there is a good deal of force in what you say in regard to the location of the toll gate which heavily penalises one particular estate. I shall first deal with the particular toll gate before I proceed to the general question of the double toll. In regard to the particular toll gate, it certainly makes things hard for one estate ; and one way out of the difficulty may be found by recourse to one of two alternatives, *i. e.*, either moving the toll gate slightly or else having recourse to an arrangement that has just been sanctioned by the Government, and, that is, to provide for a compounding fee for all vehicles and animals passing through that particular toll gate. The arrangement recently sanctioned by the Government is that a monthly compounding fee of twenty-one times the day rate be allowed for anybody living

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

within a radius of three miles who applies for it. If you find that that does not work fairly, I suggest that you represent the matter again and the Government will then consider the question of moving the toll gate, though I am rather averse from that alternative.

2. As regards the double toll, I may point out that this road is very expensive to maintain, the traffic on it is considerable, and, as you know, toll gates have recently cropped up all over Travancore, British India and elsewhere so as to enable the user to contribute towards the upkeep of the roads. In regard to the distance, you say that the two gates are close to each other; I find that the distance between the toll gates is 22 miles, and, that within a total distance of 37 miles there are only two toll gates. Travelling through British India and other places, I find that it is quite common to have toll gates much closer together. In comparison with other parts of the country, it is not too close to have two toll gates within that distance.

MEMBER: But we have the difficulty of stopping at both stations; if necessary, we shall pay the two tolls at one place.

DEWAN: I will take up for consideration the question of having one toll gate with a larger fee.

3. You refer to the question of the large fee of Re. 1-8 as. for one ton lorries with pneumatic tyres. Assuming that you have gone down the road many a time yourself, I think the first toll gate is the P. W. D. toll gate in British India which demands Rs. 2, and the Travancore toll gate demands only Re. 1-8 as. I think that is not a very heavy toll.

71. Facilities for obtaining motor and gun licenses.

MR. A. J. WRIGHT (*Member, Kannan Devan Planters' Association*) requested that facilities might be provided for the renewal of licenses relating to motor vehicles at Devicolam, and, if possible, for the issue of fresh licenses also. The present arrangement under which application had to be made to the Police Commissioner, Trivandrum, who referred it to the Devicolam Commissioner for testing the applicant's ability to drive, entailed very much delay. The Devicolam Commissioner who tested an applicant's ability to drive might be empowered to issue the license also. The annual renewal of the licenses to drive motor vehicles might also be attended to by him. With the increase in motor traffic, the existing method had become cumbersome, and decentralisation was necessary.

In the case of licenses to import and export arms and to import ammunition, etc., the matter was somewhat different; but the Government had, to some extent, recognised the principle already as the issue of licenses to possess arms and the annual renewal of such licenses were in the hands of District Magistrates. The Association hoped that the procedure could be extended to cover the other items also. Under the present conditions, the delays involved in forwarding the relative British Indian licenses to Trivandrum, before the Travancore licenses could be issued, not infrequently resulted in one or other of the licenses being time-expired before it could be utilised. When this occurred, the whole process had to be repeated and it resulted in very serious delay and inconvenience.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Wright, I do not think that there should be any very great obstacle in the way of the issue of motor licenses, or in the renewal of motor driving licenses at Devicolam. I cannot tell you anything final at present, but your suggestions will receive serious consideration.

2. On the subject of the import and export of arms, I am afraid that occasional delays in the matter of licenses for importing arms are inevitable and that the existing procedure is not capable of any simplification for the simple reason that two Governments have to handle the matter, and each Government has to take care that the transport of arms is carefully watched and the trade in it safeguarded. In the matter of import of arms, I do not hold out any hopes to you of any simplification. In the matter of export of arms, District Magistrates have already got the power to deal with them. If there are delays occasionally, it is not because the District

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly